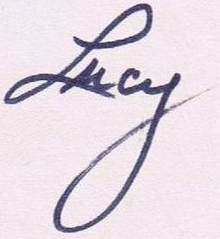
**A Celebration of the Perseverance of Lucille Ball and her Undeniable Influence on Television Comedy, Women, and Jamestown, NY**

1915

Lucy’s father contracts typhoid fever and dies five months before her brother, Fred, is born. Lucy is raised in Celoron, NY (just west of Jamestown) by her mother and maternal grandparents. Her mother, DeDe, gets a job in a local factory where she meets her future second husband, Edward Peterson. (1)

1923

Lucy auditions for a part in the Shriner production at the suggestion of her step-father. This begins her desire to be in show business. (1)

1911

Lucille Desiree Ball is born near Jamestown, NY. Her parent are Henry Ball and Desiree Hunt. (1)

1928

Lucy returns to New York City and is employed by Hattie Carnegie as a fashion model because of her beauty. (1)

1910 1920

1926

Lucy travels to New York City and begins school at the John Murray Anderson School for Dramatic Arts. This is not a particularly successful adventure. Lucy is not comfortable in the big city and does not perform well. At the suggestion of the school officials, she returns to high school in Celoron, NY after only six weeks. This is not permanent, however, and Lucy returns to New York City within a couple of years. **\* This event is the first of many setbacks in the life of Lucille Ball. Her character is one of determination, and she inspires many aspiring actors and actresses not to give up if they do not initially succeed. (2)**

1911-1915

Lucy’s father, Henry Ball works for the Bell Telephone Company. Because of his job, Lucy moves several times to Montana, Michigan, and New Jersey, in the early years of her life. (1)

1919

Lucy’s mother, DeDe, marries Edward Peterson who is not fond of small children. Lucy is left in the care of Edward Peterson’s parents when DeDe and Edward look for employment outside of Celoron, NY. (1)

\*= influential key point

1933

As a Goldwyn Girl, Lucy dyes her hair blond and moves to Hollywood to pursue an acting career. During this decade of her life, Lucy has many roles in films that are considered B level. Because of this, she acquires the nickname ‘”Queen of the B Movies”. (2)

1930

Lucy contracts rheumatoid arthritis and is forced to return to Celoron, NY to recover for a period of over two years. During this time, she even learns how to walk again. (1)

1947-1951

In 1947, Lucy enters radio. Lucy gets a lead role in the CBS radio show, *My Favorite Husband*. This show is a precursor to the *I Love Lucy* television series, which brings Lucy major stardom. (3)

1940

Lucy meets and marries Desi Arnaz after they elope to Connecticut. She is six years older than he. (1)

1930 1940

1940s

Lucy appears in various films for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM studios) but her work does not lead to fame. In 1942, Lucy dyes her hair red at the request of MGM studios for her role in the film *DuBarry was a Lady*. Her signature red hair remains with her for the rest of her life. (3)

1932

Lucy returns to New York City where she works as a cigarette girl for Chesterfield. During this time, Lucy does not find steady work on Broadway. She chooses the name ‘Diane Belmont’ as her stage name. She chooses this name after the Belmont Race Track. (1)

1950

Lucy and Desi establish Desilu Productions. The couple borrows five thousand dollars for the investment. \***They decide to use 35mm film in order to allow the films to be viewed in the future. This is a novel approach for the television industry in the 1950s. (2)**

1935

**\*Lucy signs a contract with the Max Factor Company and goes on to have the longest professional relationship with this company. (1)**

1938

A 50-year friendship begins with Gale Gordon, through Lucy’s part in *The Wonder Show*. Gale Gordon goes on to star with Lucy in the hit shows: *The Lucy Show* which airs 1962 to 1968 and *Here’s Lucy* which airs 1968 to 1974. (3)

\*= influential key point

1953

**\*Lucy gives birth to her second child, Desiderio Alberto Arnaz.. Lucy plans her cesarean section for the same day that her character Lucy Ricardo gives birth on the television show. This event makes history. (4)**

1951

Lucy gives birth to her first child, a daughter named Lucie Desiree Arnaz. Lucy is almost 40 years old.**\*Lucy becomes a working mother and sets a model for other women to balance a career with motherhood at a time where many women stay home. (4)**

1961

Lucy marries Gary Morton, a comic who is thirteen years younger than she. (1)

1957-1960

Desi and Lucy Arnaz, together with Vivian Vance and William Frawley, film a series of comedy specials entitled: *The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour* (3)

1953

**\*Lucy, and her newborn son, Desi, are the first people to appear on the cover of *TV Guide. (4)***

1967

Lucy sells the Desilu Production Company for $17 million. (1)

1950 1960

1951-1957

\*CBS adds the television show **“I love Lucy”**. In addition to Lucy and Desi Arnaz, the costars of this show are Vivian Vance and William Frawley. This television show airs for 6 years and includes 179 episodes. It brings Lucy international fame. This television show is a pioneer and sets the stage for many sitcoms to follow. This television show is responsible for several ‘firsts’. These include:

1. **It is the first time that a television show is filmed before a live audience.**
2. **It is the first time that multiple cameras (3) are used in the filming of a television show.**
3. **It is the first time that more than one television set design is used simultaneously.**
4. **It is the first time that a television show is rebroadcast through ‘reruns’.**
5. **It is the first time that ‘flat lighting’ is used to decrease shadows.**
6. **She is the first pregnant woman visualized on television.**
7. **This number one rated television show is so popular that it is viewed in 10 million homes. It is the first in history to do so. (5)**

1962-1968

CBS runs *The Lucy Show.* (1)

1960

Sadly, Lucy and Desi Arnaz divorce after 20 years of marriage. She borrows $3 million to purchase Desi’s half of the company.

**\*She becomes the first woman to manage a major production company. (5)**

1968

Lucy films the hit movie *Yours, Mine and Ours* with costar Henry Fonda. (3)

\*= influential key point

1989

Lucy dies of a ruptured aorta at the age of 77. She is initially buried in Los Angeles. In 2002, she is buried in Lake View Cemetery, Jamestown, NY with her family. (1)

1986

ABC airs the sitcom, *Life With Lucy*, but the show is dropped within a couple of months. (3)

1968-1974

CBS runs the sitcom *Here’s Lucy* (3)

1970 1980

1989

**\*The Presidential Media of Freedom award is bestowed on Lucille Ball. (2)**

1971

The International Radio and Television Society’s Gold Medal is presented to Lucy. \***She is the first woman to ever receive this award. (4)**

1988

Lucy suffers a mild heart attack. (1)

1986

**\*For her contributions as a female comedienne, Lucy is awarded the Kennedy Center Honor. (4)**

1974

Lucy films the hit musical, *Mame* (3)

\*= influential key point

**Summary**

**Lucille Ball was undoubtedly one of the most influential people of the twentieth century. She revolutionized the television industry, especially television comedy. Lucy inspired women to strive for their dreams and demonstrated that a balance between motherhood and a career was possible. She had a huge impact on her hometown and “put Jamestown on the map”. Finally, Lucy exemplified a life of perseverance, working through many obstacles and hardships to achieve her dreams.**

**Lucille Ball was a pioneer in comedy and has earned many titles including: “Queen of Comedy”, “Greatest Comedienne of All Time”, and “First Lady of Television”. Her type of humor and the comedy she brought to television influenced many other aspiring actors and actresses including John Belushi, Dan Ackroyd, Julie Andrews, and Carol Burnett, and she paved the way for the format of sitcom television.(6) The formation of the Desilu Production Company in 1950 became the largest television production company in the world at that time. The hit television series, “I Love Lucy” also significantly changed the face of American television. This was a #1 rated television show that won a total of 200 awards, including 5 Emmy Awards. *I Love Lucy* influenced American homes since the show represented a typical American family in the 1950s. Lucy insisted that the set designs, props, and clothes would relate to the typical American family. Lucy’s creative genius had a tremendous influence on American television. (4) It was fitting that she was the first person to be shown on the cover of *TV Guide*.**

**Lucile Ball greatly influenced women. At a time in American culture when most women stayed home to raise their families, Lucy demonstrated that it is possible to manage a successful career with motherhood. This would have significant influence on women and their place in the workforce. Also, through the filming of *I Love Lucy*, she did not try to hide the fact that she was pregnant, and this was written into the script. This would also influence women in that it was the first time pregnancy was openly shown on television. (4) When the production company, Desilu, was established in the early 1950s, Lucy became the first woman to manage a major production company. Her influence on women was undeniable.**

**Lucy was very proud of her heritage and her family. She always had a special love for Jamestown, NY, and she has greatly influenced this town. In many of the *I Love Lucy* episodes, Jamestown, NY is mentioned by name, putting Jamestown ‘on the map.’ The Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Center Museum has been established in her hometown for visitors to see and explore the history, accomplishments, props, and costumes of Lucille Ball. In this town, she is buried. (7) Many visitors come to Jamestown each year to relive the glory days of Lucille Ball and to pay their respects at her grave.**

**Lastly, perhaps like no other person of the twentieth century, Lucille Ball was an icon of perseverance. One has only to study the events of her life to realize that she endured many hardships, including the death of her father at age 3, expulsion from drama school after only a few weeks, debilitating illness, unsuccessful attempts on Broadway and in films, multiple miscarriages, and a difficult marriage which ended in divorce. She shaped the lives of aspiring actors and actresses not to give up when their career was not going well and gave hope to countless people experiencing hardships in their lives. (5) Through it all she found a way to make people laugh.**

Endnotes

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